CROSSFEED

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Maintenance Management

Smokers Beware: There's More to Fear than Cancer

By AMC(AW) Paul Hofstad

Are smokers a dying breed? I believe so, especially after some of the things I have seen on surveys. No, it's not only because of the cancer-causing ingredients in cigarettes, but, as you'll see in the accompanying photos, personnel are smoking in areas that can provide quick access to the afterlife. All it takes is one stray ash or match to reduce a person's worry from getting cancer to being killed in an explosion. Medical examiners probably would be hard pressed to identify any cancerous cells.

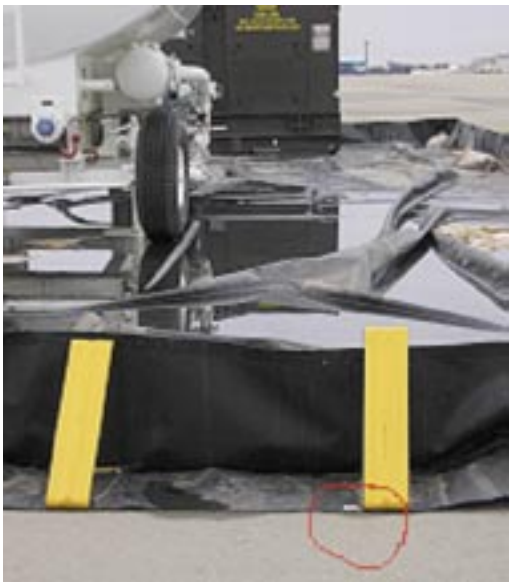
I have found cigarette butts in these areas:

- Inside hazardous material (HAZMAT) storage areas
- Inside and directly outside of hazardous waste (HAZWASTE) sites
- Inside a remote test cell, beside a 5,000-gallon JP-5 tank
- In front of a line shack, where a 500-gallon JP-5 tank was stored
- Inside a storage room with fuel-sample bottles and PON-6 oil-servicing units
- Inside emergency reclamation (EREC) kits

In one command, the smoke pit was 23 feet from the HAZMAT lockers. Each locker had "No Smoking Within 50 Feet" labels on it. The smoke pit accommodated all ranks, enlisted and officer. I suppose the warning signs simply are decorations to be ignored until an explosion occurs.

The flash point for JP-5 is 140 degrees Fahrenheit. HAZMAT, such as paint waste, thinner, and NAPTHA, have considerably lower flashpoints. The odds of these chemicals catching fire or exploding are far greater than JP-5. There are reasons why ships turn off the smoking lamp during fuel movement and why they also set boundaries when doing hot-work. It's because mishaps have occurred in the past. Take off the blinders and look around; you'll be amazed at what you see.

Chief Hofstad is a maintenance analyst at the Naval Safety Center.



Runway Incursions

By ACCS(AW/SW) Leslee Mcpherson

RUNWAY INCURSION — Any occurrence at an airport involving an aircraft, vehicle, person, or object on the ground that creates a collision hazard with an aircraft taking off, intending to take off, landing, or intending to land.

Would you send your personnel out on the flight deck without being trained properly? Would you assign them to drive SE without proper qualifications? The answer to these questions is "no." You want to keep your Sailors and Marines alive, and you know the risk of putting them in these dangerous situations without proper training. But do you check their airfield driver's license before sending them on the airfield? Have they been through initial training? Have they had their annual re-certification?

Runway incursions are the most frequent type of ATC HAZREPs that I receive at the Safety Center. In FY04, there was a 136 percent increase in runway incursions from FY03. Besides safety of flight and damage to aircraft and equipment, the potential exists for significant loss of life.

The increase in runway incursions has led to repercussions that severely could hamper a squadron's ability to perform routine operations. Here are some examples:

- Air Station No. 1 — Due to a sudden increase in runway incursions, all squadron airfield-drivers' licenses were cancelled, and drivers had to be escorted until re-training was accomplished.
- Air Station No. 2 — After two incidents within five hours, the air station commanding officer revoked the entire squadron's flight-line driving privileges until the squadron was retrained and qualified.

As supervisors and managers, our responsibility is to ensure personnel operate safely and are trained and qualified properly. An airfield is a dangerous environment. Allowing personnel to operate in that environment without proper training is an unnecessary risk that isn't worth the consequences.

Senior Chief Mcpherson is a facility analyst at the Naval Safety Center.

HAZMAT

Those Dreaded Rags

By ADC(AW) Gary Eldridge

Every day, the Navy and Marine Corps face the challenge of operating and maintaining the fleet while complying with environmental regulations. This burden commonly falls on a new hazardous-material (HAZMAT) or tool-room petty officer who normally is overwhelmed with broken-tool reports (BTR) and many other things, including IMRL & CAL.

Often, the question is, "Why do I have to control some darn rags anyway?" Although most commands have switched to using the newer industrial rags, we still see some commands using the bales of rags we "old-timers" are used to. Both are authorized; however, many of the old-style rags are not well-managed. Bottom line: A clear problem with the accountability of all rags exists throughout the Navy and Marine Corps. Rags are not inventoried on initial receipt, and tool tags are not used for rag checkout. Remember, rags are controlled items that require the same attention as a tool in your workcenter. So why don't we treat rags the same way?

Here are some of the most common responses we hear during safety surveys:

- "Why annotate rags in a Tool Control Log or an inventory sheet? Who cares as long as he/she brings it back?"
- "Monitoring hand-rag inventories takes too long. It's a one-for-one swap, so what's the problem?"

As a recommendation to reduce mishaps related to improper rag control, commands should establish a standard operating procedure (SOP) that specifies proper inventory and accountability procedures to be followed when handling rags. The

main point is to control your rags and help the Navy and Marine Corps save equipment and lives!

Remember, leadership determines the direction of the Navy and Marine Corps; organization determines the potential; and people determine the success of the command. Do the right thing. Proper rag control can save man-hours and lives while reducing avoidable mishaps. Numerous Class B and C mishaps have occurred over the years involving rags that were ingested by engines. We also find rags in virtually every aircraft compartment imaginable (i.e., fuel cells, engine cavities, avionics bays, flight-control compartments, and cockpits). Rag control is vital to the operational commitment of each command.

Chief Eldridge is a maintenance analyst at the Naval Safety Center.

FOD

Is "Field Day" a Thing of the Past?

By ATCS(AW/SW) Denis Komornik

When I joined the Navy more than 24 years ago, the squadrons and AIMDs would shut down every Thursday at 1300 for two hours to hold field day, no matter how bad the backlog was. This weekly cleaning removed clutter, organized spaces, and, most importantly, presented them in a professional manner.

One thing I've noticed since arriving at the Safety Center and performing safety surveys is the lack of attention to organization and cleanliness of spaces. When I address these issues with supervisors, I receive the same replies, "We're just too busy and don't have the manpower," or "Field day is a thing of the past, and we don't do it unless an inspection is coming up." These replies may sound familiar to you, and you may think they're logical, but let me give you my insight on field day that I learned long ago from my first LPO.

The No. 1 reason we hold field day on a routine basis is to reduce FOD, which is the nemesis of all aircraft maintainers. From safety wire to nuts and bolts—FOD lays all over the shop, and no one knows where it will end up.

Another reason to hold field day is to eliminate trip and fall hazards. If we already are short of personnel, the last thing we need is someone getting injured in the workcenter!

The last issue is professionalism. A sharp-looking space goes a long way and instills a sense of pride and ownership in workcenter personnel. Performing field days may seem like a pain in the neck, but, in the long run, they will save you time. Who wants to do extra maintenance as the result of a FOD mishap caused by lack of cleanliness?

It's time to remember how we used to do business. To repeat a cliché, "Practice what you preach." Don't be part of the problem; be part of the solution.

This…

Not This…

Senior Chief Komornik is a maintenance analyst at the Naval Safety Center